

without ever finding the moth and I know that many other collectors have had similar disappointments.

As far as Wales is concerned, Gordon Smith (*Proc. Chester Society of Natural Science, Literature and Art*, 1948) could only find two records of single moths taken in the Northern Counties of Wales covered by his paper, the most recent was at Ial in 1948 by R. E. Vaughan Roberts; this is only about five miles from Worlds End.

There can be no doubt that Norway spruce (*Picea abies* Karsten) is an acceptable food-plant in the wild but one wonders if the larger (and potentially more nourishing?) cones of the noble fir and its close relatives are equally acceptable; I recall a paper by J. H. Styles (*Entomologist* 94: 88) which reported damage to the cones of silver fir in Hepburn Wood, Northumberland. This locality is about ten miles from Skinner's new locality in the same county. I visited Hepburn Wood some years ago and could find only the odd old silver fir among the plantations of douglas fir and spruce and these had not dropped any cones when I was there. The specific name of the moth now in use does not help us to resolve the question!

The specimen referred to would have been my first encounter with the species but for a fortuitous catch in 1985 when a specimen was found sitting on the outside of my trap in Alderley Edge on the morning of 30th June 1985; the strange thing is that 1984 was one of the few years in which I had not collected cones in my search for this species, it must therefore be regarded as most probably the first in Cheshire as the only other report of its occurrence, in the Wirral some years earlier was never substantiated and no specimen was kept. My specimen was therefore another of those which turn up unexpectedly around the country and I am left wondering if they are breeding thinly on the various ornamental firs growing in parks and gardens. C. I. RUTHERFORD, Longridge, Macclesfield Road, Alderley Edge, Cheshire. SK9 7BL

NEW LEPIDOPTERA RECORDS FOR BRECONSHIRE IN 1986 — Three species of Lepidoptera were caught in the Rothamsted Insect Survey light trap at Lysdinam (Site No. 111, O.S. Grid Ref. SO 009 586) in Breconshire which, so far as I am aware, have not previously been recorded from the county.

Single males of *Eupithecia subumbrata* D. & S. and *E. trisignaria* H.S. (Geometridae) were caught on 6th and 21st August respectively and their identifications were confirmed by examination of the genitalia. *Schrankia costaestrigalis* Steph. (Nocutidae) was found to be fairly common with five individuals trapped between 27th July and 18th August.

From a survey of the distribution of British Eupitheciini (Riley and Prior, in prep.) and the comments of Heath (1983, *Moths and*

*Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 10 : 393) I understand that none of these species have previously been recorded from any of the three pre-1974 counties (Breconshire, Radnorshire and Montgomeryshire) which constitute the present administrative county of Powys.

Thanks are extended to Dr. F. Slater for operating the trap at Llysdinam. ADRIAN M. RILEY, Entomology and Nematology Department, Rothamsted Experimental Station, Harpenden, Herts, AL5 2JQ.

NOTES FROM THE ISLE OF CANNA — The first fortnight of December 1987 produced a remarkable period of sustained calm, sunny weather in the Hebrides, with high barometric readings. On December 9th, Mrs. W. MacKinnon, of the National Trust, found a red admiral (*Vanessa atalanta* L) fluttering inside one of her windows. *Atalanta* was more numerous on Canna in the autumn of 1987 than for many years; another butterfly unusually common was the speckled wood, *Pararge aegeria* L. In contrast, the small tortoiseshell, *Aglais urticae* L. was severely reduced in numbers by heavy May showers when the butterfly eggs were hatching, and very few specimens were seen during the year. Of the moths, the winter moth, *Operopthera brumata* L. is now unusually common, with the males being seen regularly at lighted windows. J. L. CAMBELL  
Isle of Canna, Hebrides.

UROCERUS AUGUR KLUG. (HYM.: SYMPHYTA) NEW TO GUERNSEY — On 23.viii.1987 I was given a large female "horn-tail" very similar to *Urocerus gigas*, but with a second narrow band on the abdomen, and the distal threequarters of the hind femora black. The insect was found alongside a delivered box of groceries on the back doorstep of a cottage in St. Saviours. *U. augur* is a continental species, rarely found on mainland Britain.

My thanks are due to Mr. N. Springate of the British Museum (Natural History) for identifying this insect. R. A. AUSTIN, Maymyo, Les Amballes, St. Peter Port, Guernsey.

## Current Literature

**Butterflies of the London Area** by Colin W. Plant. 199pp. many colour illustrations. 42 maps. 190 x 230 mm. Boards. London Natural History Society 1987. £15.95

A brief forward and preface is followed by a detailed chapter describing the history of butterfly recording in the London area. There follows sections on geology, butterfly habitats in London, conservation, collecting, introductions, notes on attracting butterflies to the garden and further reading. The bulk of the book com-